stan. I can give you the example, Mr. Prime Minister–there was fear in our mind whether Pakistan would like us or not–that when the Indian football team has been to Peshawar, it was the Pakistan political leaders in the Government who came in the street, embraced our players for scoring the goals and expressed their goodwill. So, on every part, it was found that the goodwill was still there. But unfortunately whenever an initiative is taken by the Government, some international forces, by their own design, try to see that Indo-Pakistan relationship is not further gaining momentum. The contribution made by the late Lal Bahadur Shastri, who laid his life in Tashkent, was for a fast durable peace in Pakistan and India; followed by Shrimati Indira Gandhi's initiative in the Shimla Agreement; Shri Vajpayee, when has was the Foreign Minister, did a tremendous job to improve the relationship between India and Pakistan; and finally, in the SAARC Summit led by shri Rajiv Gandhi, Mrs. Bhutto had to say that India's intention was the best one so far as Pakistan was concerned.

May I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether in his next process which he is likely to do with the Prime Minister of Pakistan in Male, he is convinced or hopeful that it will be within the ambit of the Shimla Agreement?

Secondly, in view of the growing democratic development in Pakistan by taking away the powers of the President and all these things, is the Prime Minister fully convinced that the time has come that the international pressure, which has come from time to time to frustrate the relations between India and Pakistan will be totally stopped this time and will the Government of India, under no circumstances, submit to any kind of manipulations, machinations and power games in the sub-continent while deciding the relation between India and Pakistan straightaway?

We have full confidence in the Prime Minister, Shri I.K. Gujral, who is having personal, political and diplomatic experience. He is going to make a breakthrough and the nation should not question anything at this moment and should not embarrass him.

I would like to know whether the Shimla Agreement would cover the ambit of his discussion while he meets the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : Sir, while I think my young friend for complimenting me, on one point, I would not like to comment. That is, whatever is happening internally in Pakistan, whether the Constitution is amended or not amended, I am not going to comment on that. That is their business.

So far as the bilateral talks are concerned, the Shimla Agreement emphasises the bilateral talks. And, I think, the two rounds that have taken place at the Foreign Secretary level, at my level as the Foreign Minister and third that might take place in Male is within that ambit.

Retirement Age

*442. SHRI P. KODANDA RAMAIAH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Fifth Pay Commission has recommended for raising retirement age of Government employees from 58 to 60 years;

(b) if so, whether implementation of this particular recommendation is likely to increase the number of educated unemployed; and

(c) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI. S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) Yes Sir. The Fifth Central Pay Commission has recommended that the age of retirement of Central Government employees (except those in the Armed Forces, Central Police Organisations or on extension) be raised to 60 years with effect from a prospective date to be notified by the Government. The Commission has also recommended that since the present age of superannuation of Central Government employees has acted a bench mark for determining the ages of superannuation of other categories of employees, judicial officers, constitutional authorities etc. the Commission expects that its recommendation would lead to a suitable re-adjustment in order to maintain the present relativities.

(b) and (c) The recommendations of the Pay Commission are under the consideration of the Government.

Pay Commission

*451.+ DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI :
DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for the inordinate delay in adoption of the recommendations of Fifth Pay Commission;

(b) whether the Government have received threats from the Central Government employees to go on strike at any time on this issue;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d) the expected date of adoption and implementation of the report; and

(e) the financial implications on account of implementation of the recommendations of the above commission?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) There has been no delay in the consideration of the Report of the Pay Commission. In accordance with the established procedure, the recommendations are required to be scrutinised by an Empowered Commitee, which has already met thrice. The views of the Staff Side are also required to be ascertained. A meeting has been held with them. The report is being processed further.

(b) and (c) The Government has not received any notice/threat from the Government employees to go on strike on this issue.

(d) The Government is taking steps to ensure that decisions are taken soon on the recommendations of the Pay Commission.

(e) The Commission has estimated an expenditure of Rs. 8800 crores per annum if all its recommendations are implemented.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Since Q.Nos. 442 and 451 are identical, I am allowing both Qestions to be taken up together.

SHRI P. KODANDA RAMAIAH : My question is very clear about the impact of raising the retirement age on the employment situation in the country. We are going in a big way for liberalisation and we are also going in a big way on the disinvestment side. There is a certain shrinkage in the opportunities for imployment in the Government sector and the private sector has not been able to fill the gap. When this is the situation, is it advisable for the Government to raise this retirement age to 60 years? I would like to have the definite views of the Government.

SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN : The impact of the proposal to raise the age of retirement on the employment situation in the country is being taken into account while examining the proposals of the Pay Commission. I would like to inform the hon. Member that this aspect will be taken into account while arriving at a decision in the matter.

SHRI P. KODANDA RAMAIAH : There is another angle to this situation, that is reservation problem. After a lot of trouble, a lot of study and a lot of struggle, we have been able to get reservation through Mandal Commission in addition to whatever reservations are available to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. If the Government raises the retirement age to 60 years, for two more years there will not be any filling up of vacancies now reserved for the backward classes under the Mandal Commission recommendations. That would have a cascading effect in the sense that the eligibility age of getting into Government service will not be postponed by the Government and to that extent many backward class candidates will not be able to get into the service because of age bar. When this is the impact, I would like to know the Government's view as to how they are going to deal with this reservation problem under Mandal Commission if they raise the retirement ago to 60 years.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): I might assure my friend that all the points that he has made will be kept in mind when the Government takes a decision.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE :Sir, since the question is addressed to the Prime Minister, I would like to broaden the question.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Do you intend to change the question?

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : No, I would like to broaden the question All the questions with regard to the age of 58 years or 60 years are the questions related to urban areas. There are several schemes of the Government for rural sector which also put a limit on 60 years, like the insurance scheme for agricultural labourers, after death, where the limit is 60 years. Now, why that limit is put there, I do not know.

About the retirement age whether it is 58 years or 60 years, the Committee of Secretaries would make its recommendations and that will be discussed. My question is, in this connectioin, why is it not being done that the age limit of the people receiving insurance benefits, etc. in the rural sector under various schemes be moved above 60 years? Would you agree to it?

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : I thought the question was focused on the Pay Commission. But all the same, since Shri Chatterjee is a free thinker, I will keep that in mind.

SHRI A.C. JOS : Sir, enchancing the age ot retirement is a very serious question. Any recommendation of the Pay Commission will have an impact on the States. In Kerala the retirement age, even today, is 55 years; in some States, it is 56 years and like that. I will be happy if you can have a uniform retirement age throughout the country.

My question to the hon. Prime Minister is, before accepting these recommendations or enhancing or changing the retirement age or even without changing the retirement age, will the Government of India consult the State Governments and recommend to the State Governments to have a uniform retirement age throughout the country and as Shri Nirmal Kanti Chatterjee said, will it consult the State Governments on every thing? There should be uniformity regarding the retirement age in the public sector, private sector as well as in Government service. Now the disparity makes the things different.

My qestion is, will the Government consult the State Governments and take a uniform policy in this matter?

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is with regard to Pay Commission.

SHRI A.C. JOS : I am talking only about the Pay Commission's recommendations.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : I have only said and my colleague has already suggested that the Pay Commission's report is under consideration by various Committees as to what would be the fall out and various other aspects; naturally everything will be kept in mind when we come to a final conclusion.

[Translation]

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIA : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Pay Commission should have submitted their report by now but they have failed to submit it so far. It is a much awaited report for the people. I want to know as to how long people have to wait for its final submission by the Government. Further, what are you going to do for creating job opportunities for youngesters Will you let me know the time by which you are going to implement those recommendations? I also want to know the time by when and the date from which the report you would be effective?

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is no question of delaying it. It is only two weeks back that I have assumed the charge of the Prime Minister.....*(Interruptions)*

DR. STYANARAYAN JATIA : But the same Government is there.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : The Government is always there but everything will be be decided by the committee. ....*(Interruptions)*

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIA : Now you make an announcement.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : What announcement?

DR STAYANARAYAN JATIA : By when and the date from which it will be implemented?

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : You can not ask that.

[Translation]

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : I tell you with due respect that I will ask the committees looking into various aspects to finish their job early.

[English]

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : The Minister has told that the Government has not received any notice/threat from the Government employees to go on strike. But I know that both grade I and Grade II empoyees of the Department of Home, Department of Defence and Department of Health have given several representations to the Hon. Minister. So are any representations by these respective Ministries received and what is the present status of the thinking of the Government?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : It is true that we have received a number of representations from a number of employees' organizations. It fact, they run into more than hundred. Each one of these representations has been forwarded to the Empowered Committee. The Empowered Committee is looking into those representations.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : In the Empowered Committee, are they all people belonging to the Indian Civil Service or is it consisting of people from Department of Health and other Engineering Services?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : All categories of employees belonging to many, many departments have represented. Offhand, I cannot say whether this particular association has represented or not. I will find out and let you know.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Are they represented in the Committee.....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : He is asking whether other than IAS officers, are there other Members or not?

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : It it that only the Indian Administrative Service is represented?

SHRI P. CHADAMBARAM : The Empowered Committee consists of the Secretary of Department of Expenditure as the Chairman, Secretary, Ministry of Personnel, Secretary, Ministry of Defence, Secretary, Department of Revenue, Secretary, Departement of Posts who is not an IAS officer, Secretary, Department of Telecom who is not an IAS officer, Secretary, Department of Health, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology who is not an IAS officer, Member (Staff) Railway Board who is not an IAS officer and Deputy Controller and Auditor-General who is not an IAS officer.

MR. CHAIRMAN : All right.

[Translation]

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, In his reply the hon. Minister has said that he is going to increase the retirement age from 58 to 60 years. It will be implemented from the date, the Government takes a decision In this regard. It was repeated several months ago but due to the delay on the part of the Government, a final decision has so far not been taken which is affecting hundreds of people who are retiring daily. The hon. Finance Minister has himself accepted that a large number of representations have come to him from employees. I want to know from him as to whether he has given any time limit, to say two months or three months or six months to the empowered Committee for submission of their recommendations?

My second question is that a bonange has been given to IAS officers but other categories of employees including the Armed Forces personnel and ex-servicemen are not happy with Pay Commission's recommendations. So, whether you would like to include at least a representative of Armed Forces personnel so that their views are also known to the Committee?

[English]

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Sir, no decision has been taken about the retirement age. Such a decision can be taken only ofter the Empowered Committee has made its recommendations to the Government and the Government has considered the report at the highest level. It is, therefore, not possible to ask anyone to implement it unless government takes a decision at the highest level.

As regards the Armed Forces, the Pay Commission's report deals with the Armed Forces. The Secretary, Ministry of Defence is a member of the Empowered Committee.

DR. M.P. JAISWAL : He is an IAS officer...*(Interrutions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Sir, I have no doubt in my mind.....*(Interruptions)*

DR M.P.JAISWAL : Who represents the Armed Forces? The Secretary, Defence is an IAS officer....*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : So what if he is an IAS officer?

[English]

Please, you cannot disturb like that. Let the hon. Minister answer. Do not do like that.

[Translation]

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN : Problem remains the same. IAS officers are not giving due weightage to Armed Forces. Therefore my request is only to include some Armed Forces's personnel in place of the Defence Secretary.

[English]

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Sir, I have no doubt in my mind that the views of the Armed Forces, particularly of the Chiefs of the three Services will be more than adequately represented and articulated in the Empowered Committee. I will ensure that their views are heard and articulated in the Empowered Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Sharad Pawar to ask the question.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Thank you Sir. I have got the reply.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Sir, I am on question number 442. It is the same question. You have linked the two questions together.

Sir, this is a very serious issue. The Government has categorically stated here that the increasing of the retirement age is under the active consideration of the Government. This has got a very large implication in our society. All the youth organisations in our country have expressed their anguish and their reservation regarding this recommendation of the Pay Commission. So also, the educated unemployment in this country is growing up and recruitment in all the Government Departments is banned. Where will our unemployed youth go? If the retirement age goes up, it will have very serious effect on the employment opportunities in our country.

So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister that before taking any decision in this regard whether the Government will call the representatives of the political youth organisations of this country to have a meaningful dialogue with these organisations.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : Senior citizens also can be called....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN : Sir, as we have already stated earlier, before a final decision is taken all the points will be seriously examined. Regarding youth also, they can make the representations to the Empowered Committee.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH : Sir, for the first time in this Pay Commission's report a recommendation has been made to abolish three-and-a-half lakh posts. I think it is beyond their competence. It is not related to pay. As referred to in his question by Shri RameshChennithala just now, in the face of growing unemployment, the Government being the biggest employer, if the Pay Commission has recommended to abilish three-and-a-half lakh posts, it will have an adverse impact on the younger generation seeking employment in this country. So, it is a very serious aspect.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please ask the question.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH : Sir, I think it is beyond the competence of that Committee. I would like to know whether the Government will reject that outright or not.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Sir as I said and as the Prime Minister has said, all the recommendations of the Pay Commission are being considered by the Empowered Committee and we expect to receive the recommendations of the Empowered Committee. How is it possible for a Minister or anyone to stand up in the House today and say; "we accept this or we reject that "? We will keep all points of view in mind.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJ BHAI CHIKHALIA : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me a chance to speak. I wanted to say something about 33 percent reservation.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am giving you more.

SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJ BHAI CHIKHALIA : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government is going to accept the Pay Commission's recommendations but today the country is faced with the increasing problem of population and unemployment. Just now almost every member has expressed his concern about the problem of unemployed youths. Whether the Government have considered the option to encourage voluntary retirement for it will increase, the job opportunities in the country. Whether Pay Commission has made any recommendation for encouraging the voluntary retirement from the Government Service.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : She wants to know whether there is any provision for increasing the voluntary retirement in the Government service.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Sir, there is no proposal at present to introduce the Voluntary Retirement Scheme for Government employees.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJ BHAI CHIKHALIA : Whether you will make any provision in this regard, for it would increase the job opportunities for our youths ?

[English]

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Sir, I take note of the hon. Member's suggestion.

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, unemployment is a serious threat to this country. As the hon. Members have observed, I also oppose the proposal for enhanching the retirement age from 58 years to 60 years. I would like to know whether there is any proposal to enhance the age limit in the Central Government.....

MR. CHAIRMAN : He has already replied to that question.

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : No, Sir; he has not replied. I would like to know whether the age limit for joining the Central Government service will be increased, becuase it is very difficult to get a job at the age of 35 years or 38 years. I want to know whether it will be enchanced to 40 years or 42 years and whether such a proposal is pending with the Government.

SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN : Sir, there is no such proposal.